A CRITICAL STUDY OF MAJOR THEMES IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF PREETI SHENOY

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SYNOPSIS

A CRITICAL STUDY OF MAJOR THEMES IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF PREETI SHENOY

INTRODUCTION:

Preeti Shenoy is a postmodern Indian novelist. Her novels are the examples of extraordinary literary works. The major themes in most of her novels are based on lives of educated, intelligent, beautiful working young women. Preeti Shenoy was born on 21 December 1971 in India and studied in various Kendriya Vidyalayas in all over India as her father frequently got transferred from one city to another. She chose writing as her career. Though she started writing lately, her contribution to Indian English Literature is truly praiseworthy. She has been continuously nominated for the Forbes List of the 100 most influential celebrities in India since 2013. She has also received the Indian of the Year Award by Brands Academy. Preeti Shenoy received Business excellence award given by the New Delhi Management Institute. She is the best-selling woman author in India and that's why India Today noted her as ***'only woman in the highest selling league'.*** The achievements of Preeti Shenoy in the field of writing are mind blowing. Daily News and Analysis has described her as a ***"keenly observant mind"***, and Times of India describes her writing as ***"excellent story telling skills"***. Cosmopolitan has described her as ***"one of India's most popular authors".*** Being a TEDx speaker, she has also influenced the lives of many youngsters by her extraordinary motivational speeches. She is also a painter, a poetess and Yoga enthusiast.

Till date Preeti Shenoy has penned 13 books including fiction and non-fiction and most of them have been best sellers. Her writing is still going on. She mainly focuses on writing novels with female protagonists. Her first book *34 Bubblegums and Candies* was published in 2008 which is a collection of short stories. Then she published her first novel *Life Is What You Make It* in 2011 which turned to be a milestone in her writing career. This novel was an all-time best seller in 2011. Then she published *Tea for Two and a Piece of Cake* (2012), *The Secret Wish List* (2012), *The One You Cannot Have* (2013), *It Happens for a Reason* (2014), *It's All in the Planets* (2016), *A Hundred Little Flames* (2017), *The Rule Breakers* (2018), *Wake Up, Life Is Calling* (2019) and *When Came Love Came Calling* (2020), one book

every year as her formula seems to be. She has also written three excellent books of non-fiction. They are *34 Bubblegums and Candies* (2008), *Love, Kisses and All Things Warm* (2015) and *Love a Little Stronger* (2018).

The themes in the novels of Preeti Shenoy are based on various facets of relationships, love, romance, hope, aspiration, and life. She is called the relationship expert. She doesn't only focus on the boyfriend-girlfriend type relationship but also on various other kinds of relationships like parents-daughter and a doctor-patient relationship in *Life Is What You Make It* (2011), husband-wife, mother-son and daughter-in-law and mother-in-law relationship in *The Secret Wish List* (2012), grandfather-grandson relationship in *A Hundred Little Flames* (2017) and relationship between people with contrasting personalities in *When Came Love Came Calling* (2020). Two of her novels *Life Is What You Make It* (2011) and *Wake Up, Life Is Calling* (2019) are based on the theme of a serious mental disorder (paranoia) called bipolar disorder. The theme of love is also elaborated in a wonderful manner in almost all her novels. She also throws light on the lives and status of contemporary women in Indian society. Patriarchy and gender discrimination are also found as themes in some of her novels. Thus Preeti Shenoy explores various themes in her novels which touch all the aspects of human life.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Preeti Shenoy is one of the most popular authors in India. She has become successful in capturing young minds. Since she is new to the literary world, most of her work is still open for serious criticism. A few research articles by various Ph. D scholars have been published but they are not sufficient.

Two of the novels *(Life Is What You Make It* and *Wake Up, Life Is Calling)* of Preeti Shenoy deal with the theme of paranoia or mental disorder. The protagonist of the novels is a victim of a rare mental disorder called bipolar disorder. Some research scholars have worked on the novel *Life Is What You Make it* and they have written many scholarly articles. The main concern of these research articles is the bipolar disorder and human behavior. Ms. Monika Kumari and Dr. Ram Krishan have jointly written an article entitled *Triumph of mental disorder for the willingness to live in the novel "Life Is What You Make It" by Preeti Shenoy.* In the introduction section of this article, they say, *"As far as we know she is a romantic writer, but her books also teach us great lessons of life pertaining to humanity."*

Preeti Shenoy is called the relationship expert. She efficiently elaborates multifaceted relationships in almost all her novels. The scholars named Kavita Dubey and Meera Shoni have also thrown light on human relationships as portrayed by Preeti Shenoy in their article entitled *A Study of Human Relationships in Preeti Shenoy's Novel "Life Is What You Make It.* Many other scholars have also worked on her other novels as well. They have studied the human relationships, love, family relations, man-woman relationship, youth themes and psychoanalytic approach in her novels. Some of the scholars have also worked on emancipation of women in her novels. Youth is a dominant theme in most of the novels of Preeti Shenoy. A scholar named B. Rathika has also written a Ph.D thesis on the topic *"Youth Themes in the Works of Preeti Shenoy, Chetan Bhagat and Ravinder Singh."*

Though some scholars have done their best on Preeti Shenoy's work, many more themes in her novels are still to be explored. The paranoia, love, relationship, feminism, patriarchy and gender discrimination in her novels need to be given more attention. Overall, Preeti Shenoy's work is such an excellent work that it deserves much more critical acclaim.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF THE RESEARCH:

A Critical Study of Major Themes in the Select Novels of Preeti Shenoy

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH:

- To explain the major themes in the selected novels.
- To explore the status and condition of women in these novels
- To explore the various angles of love and relationships and how they affect the lives of men and women
- To explain the effect of patriarchy and gender discrimination on women
- To analyze the literary works of the selected author thematically in terms of love, life and relationship

HYPOTHESIS:

The proposed research work is based on the following hypothesis:

- Human relationships play a crucial role in lives of men and women.
- Women usually receive a lower side in relationships.
- Love plays a vital role in the lives of men and women.

- Love has various forms like romantic love, platonic love and many others.
- Hope and strong will power helps to overcome paranoiac condition.
- Patriarchy and gender discrimination ruin the life of women.
- Women face various challenges in family and relationships.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The research will surely contribute to enrich the study of English literature. With the help of the themes used in the selected novels of Preeti Shenoy, the present study focuses on the status of women in various kinds of relationships. This study is a sincere attempt to throw light on the condition of women. The selected author, in her novels, clearly depicts the lively and graphic images of real condition of women in contemporary India. Her novels are not just imaginary stories but great literary works which discuss the challenges and achievements of modern women. Her work is a great contribution to Indian literature.

The challenges that the women have to face undergo a great change as time changes. Women have faced various social evils in almost all eras. The present day women i.e. modern women also have to face various social evils and problems. This study will try to discuss those problems in detail. Today, women are not hesitated to choose the fields of career which are dominated by men. They are doctors, engineers, architects, artists, photographers, film makers, authors, farmers, designers, homemakers, shopkeepers, entrepreneurs and even pilots and soldiers. Of course, exploring these areas is not smooth sailing. They have to face tremendous challenges and sometimes even nagging from the society. They always fall prey to gender discrimination at home and at work places. The proposed work will critically study all these challenges in detail.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS:

The proposed work is dedicated to explore various themes in the novels of Preeti Shenoy. Since major themes in her novels revolve around women and their lives, this research is an effort to throw a light on the challenges and social problems the women have to face. This work will also celebrate their achievements. They always receive the lower side in the relationships. The present study will also focus on this issue.

The proposed work will only study the major themes in the selected novels of Preeti Shenoy. With the help of her novels, the work will try to touch various dimensions of the lives of women. It will try to explain the role of modern women in love, life and relationships by strictly adhering to the themes of selected novels. It doesn't go beyond that. The study will be carried out only on the single author; hence the researcher, in any way, is not allowed to consider other authors to be compared.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The proposed study is purely based on the major themes of the selected novels of Preeti Shenoy. The themes of novels will be analyzed critically to reach the conclusion. The critical study will be carried out on the basis of library method i.e. primary and secondary sources of information. The library and internet resources will be utilized to carry out the present research. The present study does not involve any kind field work. The researcher will make use of qualitative data analysis method. The MLA methodology will strictly be followed.

Data Collection Method: The data required for the proposed research work will be collected from various related books, research articles and web sources.

Data Analysis Method: The researcher will use the qualitative method of data analysis.

PLAN OF THESIS

The proposed research work will be based only on the following eight novels of Preeti Shenoy:

- Life Is What You Make It (2011)
- Wake Up, Life Is Calling (2019)
- The Secret Wish List (2012)
- The One You Cannot Have (2013)
- It Happens for a Reason (2014)
- A Hundred Little Flames (2017)
- The Rule Breakers (2018)
- When Came Love Came Calling (2020)

This research work contains following six chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher intends to elaborate the introduction to the proposed research work. This chapter deals with the key concepts like Indian Writing in English, Popular Fiction, History of Indian Novel, Indian Women Novelists in English, Preeti Shenoy as a novelist, Feminism, Patriarchy and Gender Discrimination. The research method to be used to complete the proposed work will also be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Paranoia and Willingness to Live

- Life Is What You Make It (2011)
- Wake Up, Life Is Calling (2019)

In this chapter, with the help of the above selected novels, the researcher will discuss the mental disorder, its causes, effects, treatment, and mentality of society towards illness and how strong will power and hope can help to overcome the disorder.

Chapter 3: Human Relationships and the Role of Women in Relationships

- The One You Cannot Have (2013)
- A Hundred Little Flames (2017)

This chapter, with the help of the above selected novels, is to discuss various forms of relationships in detail. It also discusses the role of men and women in the relationships; how it affects their lives and what the actual status of women is in relationships.

Chapter 4: Various Forms of Love and the Role of Women in Love

- It Happens for a Reason (2014)
- When Came Love Came Calling (2020)

In this chapter, on the basis of the above two novels, the researcher will discuss the various shades of love depicted in the selected novels; and how it affects the lives of men and women.

Chapter 5: Patriarchy and Its Effect on Women

- The Secret Wish List (2012)
- The Rule Breakers (2018)

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the patriarchy which is a serious evil of the society. This chapter will discuss the effect of patriarchy on the lives of women.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter will be an effort to conclude the research work. The findings of the study will be discussed in detail in this chapter. The researcher will discuss whether the proposed work meets the predetermined objects and hypothesis based on the obtained observations. This chapter will also provide some suggestions for further studies in research.

PROBABLE DATE OF RESEARCH COMPLETION:

The present study is proposed to be completed within the time limit as stipulated by the university.

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